

# ON A SPECIAL CLASS OF SMOOTH CODIMENSION TWO SUBVARIETIES IN $\mathbb{P}^n$ , $n \geq 5$

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

We work on an algebraically closed field of characteristic zero.

By Lefschetz's theorem, a smooth codimension two subvariety  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 4$ , which is not a complete intersection, lying on a hypersurface  $\Sigma$ , verifies  $\dim(X \cap \text{Sing}(\Sigma)) \geq n - 4$ .

In this paper we deal with a situation in which the singular locus of  $\Sigma$  is as large as can be, but, at the same time, the simplest possible: we assume  $\Sigma$  is an hypersurface of degree  $m$  with an  $(m-2)$ -uple linear subspace of codimension two.

More generally, we are concerned with smooth codimension two subvarieties  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 5$ .

In the first part we consider smooth subcanonical threefolds  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^5$  and we prove that if  $\deg(X) \leq 25$ , then  $X$  is a complete intersection (Prop. 2.2). In the second section we study a particular class of codimension two subvarieties and we prove the following result.

**Theorem 1.1.** *Let  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 5$ , be a smooth codimension two subvariety (if  $n = 5$  assume  $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z}H$ ) lying on a hypersurface  $\Sigma$  of degree  $m$ , which is singular, with multiplicity  $m - 2$ , along a linear subspace  $K$  of dimension  $n - 2$ . Then  $X$  is a complete intersection.*

This gives further evidence to Hartshorne conjecture in codimension two.

It is enough to prove the theorem for  $n = 5$ , the result for higher dimensions will follow by hyperplane sections. For  $n = 5$  it is necessary to suppose  $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z}H$ , whereas for  $n \geq 6$ , thanks to Barth's theorem, this hypothesis is always verified.

The proof for  $n = 5$  goes as follows. Using the result of the first part we may assume  $d \geq 26$ , then we prove, under the special assumptions of the theorem, that either  $\deg(X)$  is less than 25 or we use the result of Lemma 3.3 to conclude that  $S$  is a complete intersection.

By the way we give a little improvement of earlier results on the non existence of rank two vector bundles on  $\mathbb{P}^4$  with small Chern classes, see Lemma 2.8.

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## 2. SMOOTH SUBCANONICAL THREEFOLDS IN $\mathbb{P}^5$

Let  $X$  be a smooth subcanonical threefold in  $\mathbb{P}^5$ , of degree  $d$ , with  $\omega_X \cong \mathcal{O}_X(e)$ . Let  $S = X \cap H$  be the general hyperplane section of  $X$ ,  $S$  is a smooth subcanonical surface in  $\mathbb{P}^4$ , indeed by adjunction it is easy to see that  $\omega_S \cong \mathcal{O}_S(e+1)$ . Again we set  $C$  the general hyperplane section of  $S$ ,  $C$  is a smooth subcanonical curve in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ , with  $\omega_C \cong \mathcal{O}_C(e+2)$ .

We can compute the sectional genus  $\pi(S)$ , indeed since  $\omega_C \cong \mathcal{O}_C(e+2)$  it follows that  $\pi = g(C) = 1 + \frac{d(e+2)}{2}$ .

**Lemma 2.1.** *With the notations above,  $q(S) = 0$  and all hyperplane sections  $C$  of  $S$  are linearly normal in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ .*

*Proof:* By Barth's theorem we know that if  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^5$  is a smooth threefold, then  $h^1(\mathcal{O}_X) = 0$ . Let us consider the exact sequence:  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_X(-1) \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_X \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_S \rightarrow 0$ . By taking cohomology and observing that  $h^2(\mathcal{O}_X(-1)) = h^1(\omega_X(1)) = 0$  by Kodaira, we get the result.  $\diamond$

If we look at the surface  $S$ , we can observe that most of its invariants are known. Hence it seems natural to consider the double points formula in order to get some more information.

Since  $q(S) = 0$ ,  $\pi - 1 = \frac{d(e+2)}{2}$  and  $K^2 = d(e+1)^2$ , the formula becomes:  $d(d - 2e^2 - 9e - 17) = -12(1 + p_g(S))$ , where the quantity  $1 + p_g(S)$  is strictly positive. We have the following condition:

$$d(d - 2e^2 - 9e - 17) \equiv 0 \pmod{12} \quad (1)$$

**Proposition 2.2.** *Let  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^5$  be a smooth subcanonical threefold of degree  $d$ , then if  $d \leq 25$ ,  $X$  is a complete intersection.*

*Proof:* We recall that for a smooth subcanonical threefold in  $\mathbb{P}^5$  with  $\omega_X \cong \mathcal{O}_X(e)$  we have  $e \geq 3$ , unless  $X$  is a complete intersection (see [1]). Let  $G(d, 3) = 1 + \frac{d(d-3)-2r(3-r)}{6}$  be the maximal genus of a curve of  $\mathbb{P}^3$  of degree  $d = 3k+r$ ,  $0 \leq r \leq 2$ , not lying on a surface of degree two. If we compare the value of  $\pi$  computed before with this (using  $e \geq 3$ ), we see that if  $d \leq 17$ , then  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(2)) \neq 0$ . Since by Severi's and Zak's theorems on linear normality  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_S(1)) = h^1(\mathcal{I}_X(1)) = 0$ , it follows that  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_X(2)) \neq 0$  and this implies that  $X$  is a complete intersection (see [2], Theorem 1.1).

If  $d = 18$ , then  $\pi = G(18, 3)$ . It follows that  $C$  is a.C.M. then by the exact sequence:  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^3} \rightarrow \mathcal{E} \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_C(e+6) \rightarrow 0$  we obtain  $h^1(\mathcal{E}(k)) = 0$  for all  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Hence by Horrocks' theorem  $\mathcal{E}$  is split and then  $C$  is a complete intersection. Since this holds

for the general  $\mathbb{P}^3$  section  $C$ , the same holds for  $S$  and for  $X$ .

If  $d = 19$  then  $C$  lies on a quadric surface unless  $\pi = 1 + \frac{19(e+2)}{2} \leq G(19, 3)$ . This inequality yields  $e = 3$  but if we look at formula (1) we see that this is not possible.

If  $d = 20$ , then  $\pi = G(20, 4)$ ,  $C$  is a.C.M. and we argue as in the case  $d = 18$  to conclude that  $X$  is a complete intersection.

If  $d = 21, 22, 23$  and if  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) \neq 0$ , then thanks to the "lifting theorems" in  $\mathbb{P}^4$  and  $\mathbb{P}^5$  (see [11]) we have  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_X(4)) \neq 0$  and again by [2]  $X$  is a complete intersection. We then assume  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) = 0$  and using the fact that  $\pi = 1 + \frac{d(e+2)}{2} \leq G(d, 5)$ , we obtain  $e = 3$ . However this is not possible because of formula (1).

If  $d = 24$  we still get  $e = 3$ , but formula (1) is satisfied. We have the following exact sequence  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O} \rightarrow \mathcal{E}(5) \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_X(9) \rightarrow 0$ , where  $\mathcal{E}$  is a rank two vector bundle with  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = -1$  and  $c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 4$ . If  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_X(4)) = 0$ , then  $h^0(\mathcal{E}) = 0$ , which is not possible since by [4] there exists no rank two stable vector bundle with such Chern classes. Hence it would be  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_X(4)) \neq 0$  and this implies (see [2], Theorem 1.1) that  $X$  is a complete intersection but this is also impossible since the system given by the equations  $a + b = -1$  and  $ab = 4$  does not have solution in  $\mathbb{Z}$ .

If  $d = 25$ , supposing  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) = 0$  we obtain  $e = 4$ . In that case we have exactly  $\pi = G(25, 5) = 76$  and this means that if  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) = 0$ , then  $C$  is a.C.M.. It follows that  $C$ , and then  $X$ , is a complete intersection.  $\diamond$

*Remark 2.3.* If we perform the same calculations of the proof of 2.2 for  $d = 26$ , we have that  $e = 3$ .

Now if we consider subcanonical threefolds in  $\mathbb{P}^5$  with  $e = 3$ , by Kodaira we have that  $h^0(\mathcal{O}_X(4)) = \chi(\mathcal{O}_X(4))$ . By Riemann-Roch formula for threefolds (see [1]) we compute  $\chi(\mathcal{O}_X(4)) = \frac{5d(50-d)}{24}$ . Since  $h^0(\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^5}(4)) = 126$ , it is easy to see that for  $d \geq 30$  it must be  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_X(4)) \neq 0$ , hence  $X$  is a complete intersection.

On the other hand for  $26 \leq d \leq 30$  the unique value of  $d$  satisfying (1) is  $d = 26$ . Thus we have shown that, among smooth threefolds in  $\mathbb{P}^5$  with  $e = 3$ , the only possibility for  $X$  not to be a c.i. is if  $d = 26$ .

We conclude this section with some result about rank two vector bundles. Let us start with a lemma concerning subcanonical double structures.

**Lemma 2.4.** *Let  $Y \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 4$ , be a complete intersection of codimension two. Let  $Z$  be a l.c.i. subcanonical double structure on  $Y$ . Then if  $\text{emdim}(Y) \leq n - 1$ ,  $Z$  is a complete intersection.*

*Proof:* By [10] we have that any doubling of a l.c.i.  $Y$  with  $\text{emdim}(Y) \leq \dim(Y) + 1$  is obtained by the Ferrand construction. Hence there is a surjection  $\mathcal{N}_Y^\vee \rightarrow \mathcal{L} \rightarrow 0$  where  $\mathcal{L}$  is a locally free sheaf of rank one on  $Y$ . Taking into account that  $\omega_{Z|Y} \cong \omega_Y \otimes \mathcal{L}^\vee$  (see [8]) and recalling that  $Z$  is subcanonical and  $Y$  is a c.i., we obtain that  $\mathcal{L} \cong \mathcal{O}_Y(l)$  for a certain  $l \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

On the other hand, since  $Y$  is a complete intersection, say  $Y = F_a \cap F_b$ , we have  $\mathcal{N}_Y \cong \mathcal{O}_Y(a) \oplus \mathcal{O}_Y(b)$ , then the sequence above becomes:  $\mathcal{O}_Y(-a) \oplus \mathcal{O}_Y(-b) \xrightarrow{f} \mathcal{O}_Y(l) \rightarrow 0$ . The map  $f$  is given by two polynomials of degree respectively  $a + l$  and  $b + l$ . If  $F$  and  $G$  are both not constant, it follows, since  $n \geq 4$ , that  $B := (F)_0 \cap (G)_0 \cap Y \neq \emptyset$ . For each  $x \in B$  the induced map  $f_x$  on the stalks is not surjective: absurd. Thus necessarily  $F$  or  $G$  is a non zero constant, i.e. either  $l = -a$  or  $l = -b$ . If  $l = -a$  (resp.  $l = -b$ ) we are doubling  $Y$  on  $F_b$ ,  $Z = F_a^2 \cap F_b$  (resp. we are doubling  $Y$  on  $F_a$ ,  $Z = F_a \cap F_b^2$ ). In any case,  $Z$  is a complete intersection.  $\diamond$

**Lemma 2.5.** *Let  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^4$  be a l.c.i. quartic surface with  $\omega_Z \cong \mathcal{O}_Z(-a)$ . If  $a \geq 3$ , then  $Z$  is a complete intersection.*

*Proof:* Let  $C$  be the hyperplane section of  $Z$  and let  $C_{red} = \tilde{C}_1 \cup \dots \cup \tilde{C}_s$  be the decomposition of  $C_{red}$  in irreducible components, hence  $C = C_1 \cup \dots \cup C_s$ , where  $C_i$  is a multiple structure on  $\tilde{C}_i$  for all  $i$ . We have  $\omega_C \cong \mathcal{O}_C(-a + 1)$ , on the other hand  $\omega_{C|C_i} \cong \omega_{C_i}(\Delta)$ , where  $\Delta$  is the scheme theoretic intersection of  $C_i$  and  $\bigcup_{i \neq j} C_j$ . It follows that  $\omega_{C_i} \cong \mathcal{O}_{C_i}(-a + 1 - \Delta)$  and since  $\deg(\Delta) \geq 0$ , this implies that  $p_a(C_i) < 0$ , then  $C_i$  is a multiple structure on  $\tilde{C}_i$  of multiplicity  $> 1$ .

It turns out that each irreducible component of  $Z_{red}$  appears with multiplicity  $> 1$ , thus since  $\deg(Z) = 4$  it follows that  $Z$  is a double structure on a quadric surface or a 4-uple structure on a plane. This last case can be readily solved. Indeed  $C$  would be a 4-uple structure on a line and thanks to [8] (Remark 4.4) we know that a thick and l.c.i. 4-uple structure on a line is a global complete intersection. Hence we can assume  $Z$  quasi-primitive, i.e. we can assume  $Z$  does not contain the first infinitesimal neighbourhood of  $Z_{red}$ . Anyway by [9] (see main theorem and Section B) and since  $Z_{red}$  is a plane we also have that  $Z$  is a c.i..

We then suppose that  $Z$  is a double structure on a quadric surface of rank  $\geq 2$ , which is a complete intersection (1, 2). By Lemma 2.4 it follows that  $Z$  is a c.i..  $\diamond$

**Definition 2.6.** Let  $\mathcal{E}$  be a rank two normalized vector bundle (i.e.  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = -1, 0$ ), we set  $r := \min\{n | h^0(\mathcal{E}(n)) \neq 0\}$ . If  $r > 0$ ,  $\mathcal{E}$  is stable. If  $r \leq 0$  we call  $r$  *degree of instability* of  $\mathcal{E}$ .

*Remark 2.7.* The next lemma represents a slight improvement of previous results about the existence of rank two vector bundles in  $\mathbb{P}^4$  and  $\mathbb{P}^5$ .

Indeed Decker proved that any stable rank two vector bundle on  $\mathbb{P}^4$  with  $c_1 = -1$  and  $c_2 = 4$  is isomorphic to the Horrocks-Mumford bundle and that in  $\mathbb{P}^5$  there is no stable rank two vector bundle with these Chern classes (see [4]). We show that neither are there such vector bundles with  $r = 0$ . As for bundles with  $c_1 = 0$  and  $c_2 = 3$ , there are similar results by Barth-Elenwajg (see [5]) and Ballico-Chiantini (see [1]) stating that  $r < 0$ . We prove that in fact  $r < -1$ .

**Lemma 2.8.** *There does not exist any rank two vector bundle  $\mathcal{E}$  on  $\mathbb{P}^4$  such that  $r = 0$ ,  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = -1$ ,  $c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 4$  or, respectively,  $r = -1$ ,  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = 0$ ,  $c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 3$ .*

*Proof:* We observe first of all that in both cases there are no integers  $a, b$  satisfying the equations  $a + b = c_1$ ,  $ab = c_2$ , hence the vector bundle  $\mathcal{E}$  cannot be split.

Assume  $\mathcal{E}$  has  $r = 0$ ,  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = -1$ ,  $c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 4$ , then  $h^0(\mathcal{E}) \neq 0$ . There is a section of  $\mathcal{E}$  vanishing on a codimension two scheme  $Z$ :  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O} \rightarrow \mathcal{E} \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_Z(-1) \rightarrow 0$ . We have  $\deg(Z) = c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 4$  and  $Z$  subcanonical with  $\omega_Z \cong \mathcal{O}_Z(-6)$ .

If  $r = -1$ ,  $c_1(\mathcal{E}) = 0$ ,  $c_2(\mathcal{E}) = 3$ , then  $h^0(\mathcal{E}(-1)) \neq 0$  and we get a section of  $\mathcal{E}(-1)$  vanishing in codimension two along a quartic surface  $Z$ , with  $\omega_Z \cong \mathcal{O}_Z(-7)$ .

It is enough to apply 2.5 to conclude that such vector bundles cannot exist.  $\diamond$

### 3. CODIMENSION TWO SUBVARIETIES IN $\mathbb{P}^n$ , $n \geq 5$

Let  $X \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 5$  be a smooth codimension two subvariety, lying on a hyper-surface  $\Sigma$  of degree  $m \geq 5$  with a  $(m-2)$ -uple linear subspace  $K$  of codimension two, i.e.  $K \cong \mathbb{P}^{n-2}$ . If  $n = 5$  we assume  $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z}H$ , for  $n \geq 6$  this is granted by Barth's theorem. In any case we set  $\omega_X \cong \mathcal{O}_X(e)$ .

The general  $\mathbb{P}^4$  section  $S$  of  $X$  is a surface lying on a threefold  $\Sigma \cap H$  of degree  $m$  having a singular plane of multiplicity  $(m-2)$ . We will always suppose that  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_S(2)) = 0$ .

We will prove that  $S$  contains a plane curve. First we fix some notations and state some results concerning surfaces containing a plane curve, proofs and more details can be found in [3].

Let  $P$  be a plane curve of degree  $p$ , lying on a smooth surface  $S \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ . Let  $\Pi$  be the plane containing  $P$  and let  $Z := S \cap \Pi$ . We assume that  $P$  is the one-dimensional part of  $Z$  and we define  $\mathcal{R}$  as the residual scheme of  $Z$  with respect to  $P$ , namely  $\mathcal{I}_{\mathcal{R}} := (\mathcal{I}_Z : \mathcal{I}_P)$ . The points of the zero-dimensional scheme  $\mathcal{R}$  can be isolated as well as embedded in  $P$ .

Let  $\delta$  be the  $\infty^1$  linear system cut out on  $S$ , residually to  $P$ , by the hyperplanes containing  $\Pi$ . Severi's theorem states that unless  $S$  is a Veronese surface, then  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_S(1)) = 0$  and thus  $H^0(\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^4}(1)) \cong H^0(\mathcal{O}_S(1))$ . Moreover if  $p \geq 2$ , the hyperplanes containing  $\Pi$  are exactly those containing  $P$ . This allows us to conclude that  $\delta = |H - P|$  (on  $S$ ). We will denote by  $Y_H$  the element of  $\delta$  corresponding to the hyperplane  $H$  and we call  $C_H = P \cup Y_H = S \cap H$ .

Let  $\mathcal{B}$  be the base locus of  $\delta$ . We have the following results.

**Lemma 3.1.** (i)  $P$  is reduced, the base locus  $\mathcal{B}$  is contained in  $\Pi$  and  $\dim(\mathcal{B}) \leq 0$ . The general  $Y_H \in \delta$  is smooth out of  $\Pi$  and does not have any component in  $\Pi$ .  
(ii)  $\mathcal{B} = \mathcal{R}$  and  $\deg(\mathcal{R}) = (H - P)^2 = d - 2p + P^2$ .

*Proof:* See Lemma 2.1 and 2.4 of [3].  $\diamond$

In the present situation,  $S$  is subcanonical with  $\omega_S \cong \mathcal{O}_S(e + n - 4)$ . We know  $\deg(\mathcal{R}) = d - 2p + P^2$  and we compute  $P^2$  by adjunction, knowing  $p_a(P)$  since  $P$  is a plane curve and recalling that  $K_S = (e + n - 4)H$ . It turns out that  $\deg(\mathcal{R}) = d + p^2 - p(e + n + 1)$ .

**Lemma 3.2.** *If  $S \subset \mathbb{P}^4$  is a smooth surface, lying on a degree  $m$  hypersurface  $\Sigma$  with a  $(m - 2)$ -uple plane, then  $S$  contains a (reduced) plane curve,  $P$ . If  $H$  is a general hyperplane through  $P$ , then  $H \cap S = P \cup Y_H$  where  $Y_H$  has no irreducible components in  $\Pi$  and is smooth out of  $\Pi$ .*

*Proof:* If  $\Pi$  is the plane with multiplicity  $(m - 2)$  in  $\Sigma$  and  $H$  is an hyperplane containing  $\Pi$ , we have  $H \cap \Sigma = (m - 2)\Pi \cup Q_H$ , where  $Q_H$  is a quadric surface and  $C_H = S \cap H \subset (m - 2)\Pi \cup Q_H$ . If  $\dim(C_H \cap \Pi) = 0$ , then  $C_H \subset Q_H$ , but this is excluded by our assumptions. Indeed by Severi's theorem  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_{C_H}(2)) \neq 0$  would imply  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_S(2)) \neq 0$ . So  $\dim(C_H \cap \Pi) = 1$  and  $S$  contains a plane curve. We conclude with Lemma 3.1.  $\diamond$

If  $H$  is an hyperplane through  $\Pi$ , the corresponding section is  $C_H = Y_H \cup P$ . Since  $Y_H$  does not have any component in  $\Pi$ , we have  $Y_H \subset Q_H$ . We denote by  $q_H$  the conic  $Q_H \cap \Pi$ . As  $H$  varies, the  $q_H$ 's form a family of conics in  $\Pi$ . Let  $\mathcal{B}_q$  be the base locus of  $\{q_H\}$ , we have  $\mathcal{R} \subset \mathcal{B}_q$ , since  $Y_H \cap \Pi \subset Q_H \cap \Pi = q_H$ . One can show that  $\mathcal{B}_q$  is  $(m - 1)$ -uple in  $\Sigma$  (see [3], Lemma 3.3). To prove this, just consider an equation  $\varphi$  of  $\Sigma$  and note that clearly  $\varphi \in \mathbb{I}^2(\Pi)$ . Easy computations show that all  $(s - 2)$ -th derivatives of  $\varphi$  vanish at a point  $x \in \mathcal{B}_q$ .

The following result concerns in particular subcanonical surfaces.

**Lemma 3.3.** *With notations as above ( $S$  subcanonical with  $\omega_S \cong \mathcal{O}_S(a)$ ), we have:*

- (i)  $\deg(P) \leq a + 3$ .
- (ii) *If  $\mathcal{R} = \emptyset$ , then  $S$  is a complete intersection.*

*Proof:* (i) We have already computed  $\deg(\mathcal{R}) = -p(a + 5) + d + p^2$ . Recall that  $\deg(Y_H) = d - p$  and  $\deg(\mathcal{R}) \leq \deg(Y_H)$ , this implies  $p \leq a + 4$ . We will see that the case  $p = a + 4$  is not possible. Let  $p = a + 4$ , then  $Y_H \cdot P = p - P^2 = -p(p - a - 4) = 0$ , i.e.  $Y_H \cap P = \emptyset$ . In other words the curve  $C_H = S \cap H = Y_H \cup P$  is not connected, but this is impossible since  $h^0(\mathcal{O}_{C_H}) = 1$  (use  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_S(-1) \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_S \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_{C_H} \rightarrow 0$  and  $h^1(\mathcal{O}_S(-1)) = h^1(\omega_S(1)) = 0$  by Kodaira).

(ii) Since  $S$  is subcanonical we can consider the exact sequence  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O} \rightarrow \mathcal{E} \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_S(a + 5) \rightarrow 0$ . If we restrict it to  $\Pi$  and divide by an equation of  $P$ , we get  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_\Pi \rightarrow \mathcal{E}_\Pi(-p) \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_\mathcal{R}(a + 5 - 2p) \rightarrow 0$ . If  $\mathcal{R} = \emptyset$ , then  $\mathcal{I}_\mathcal{R} = \mathcal{O}_\Pi$  and the above sequence splits. It follows that  $\mathcal{E}$  splits and  $S$  is a complete intersection.  $\diamond$

**Example 3.4.** Let  $S$  be a smooth section of the Horrocks-Mumford bundle  $\mathcal{F}$ ,  $S$  is an abelian variety and has  $\omega_S = \mathcal{O}_S$ . By Lemma 3.3 we know that if  $S$  contains

a plane curve  $P$ , then  $p \leq 3$ . Moreover,  $P$  cannot be a line or a conic, since these curves are rational and this would imply that there exists a non constant morphism  $\mathbb{P}^1 \rightarrow S$ , factoring through  $Jac^0(\mathbb{P}^1) \cong \{*\}$  and this is not possible. Then necessarily  $P$  is a plane smooth cubic (hence elliptic).

By the "reducibility lemma" of Poincaré, an abelian surface  $S$  contains an elliptic curve if and only if  $S$  is isogenous to a product of elliptic curves. It is known that the general section of the Horrocks-Mumford bundle is not isogenous to a product of elliptic curves, but there exist smooth sections satisfying such property (see [7], [6]). Summarizing we can say that among the sections of Horrocks-Mumford bundle we can find smooth surfaces containing a plane curve, but the general one does not contain any.

Now assume  $S$  to be one of those smooth surfaces containing a plane cubic,  $P$ . Let  $\Pi$  be the plane spanned by  $P$ . Recall that we have  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O} \xrightarrow{s} \mathcal{F}(3) \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_S(5) \rightarrow 0$ . We restrict the sequence to  $\Pi$  and since  $s|_{\Pi}$  vanishes along  $P$ , we can divide by an equation of  $P$  and obtain a section of  $\mathcal{F}|_{\Pi}$ . We then have  $h^0(\mathcal{F}|_{\Pi}) \neq 0$ , i.e.  $\mathcal{F}|_{\Pi}$  is not stable, in other words  $\Pi$  is an unstable plane for  $\mathcal{F}$ .

In order to prove Theorem 1.1 we need some other preliminary results.

**Lemma 3.5.** *Let  $F \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be a surface of degree  $m$ , singular along a line  $D$  with multiplicity  $m - 1$ . Then  $F$  is the projection of a surface of degree  $m$  in  $\mathbb{P}^{m+1}$  (minimal degree surface).*

*Proof:* The surface  $F$  is rational. Let  $p : F' \rightarrow F$  be a desingularization of  $F$  and let  $H$  be a divisor in  $p^*\mathcal{O}_F(1)$ . We have  $0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_{F'} \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_{F'}(H) \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_H(H) \rightarrow 0$  and since  $F'$  is rational too, then  $h^1(\mathcal{O}_{F'}) = 0$ . Now  $h^0(\mathcal{O}_H(H)) = m + 1$  ( $H$  is a rational curve), then  $h^0(\mathcal{O}_{F'}(H)) = m + 2$  and we can embed  $F'$  in  $\mathbb{P}^{m+1}$ .  $\diamond$

*Remark 3.6.* Minimal degree surfaces in  $\mathbb{P}^n$  are classified, in particular they can be: a smooth rational scroll, a cone over a rational normal curve of  $\mathbb{P}^{n-1}$  or the Veronese surface if  $n = 5$ . Except for the Veronese, all these surfaces are ruled in lines.

**Lemma 3.7.** *Let  $T \subset \mathbb{P}^{m+1}$ ,  $m \geq 3$ , be a surface ruled in lines. Let  $C \subset T$  be a smooth irreducible curve. If  $\dim(\langle C \rangle) = 3$ , then  $\deg(C) \leq \deg(T) - m + 3$ . ( $\langle C \rangle$  is the linear space spanned by  $C$ )*

*Proof:* Let us consider  $m - 3$  general points on  $C$  and let  $f_1, \dots, f_{m-3}$  be the rulings passing through these points. We consider moreover  $m - 3$  points  $p_1, \dots, p_{m-3}$  such that  $p_i \in f_i$  but  $p_i \notin \langle C \rangle$  and let also  $q_1, \dots, q_4$  be four general points in  $\langle C \rangle$ . We thus have  $m + 1$  points, spanning at most a space of dimension  $m$ , hence these points are contained in a hyperplane  $H$  of  $\mathbb{P}^{m+1}$ . Now  $\langle C \rangle \subset H$  since  $q_i \in H \forall i = 1, \dots, 4$ ,  $f_i \subset H$  since  $\text{card}(f_i \cap H) > 1 \forall i = 1, \dots, m - 3$ , so  $H \cap T$  contains  $C, f_1, \dots, f_{m-3}$  (which form a degenerate curve in  $T$  of degree

$m - 3 + \deg(C))$  and this yields:  $\deg(T) \geq \deg(C) + m - 3$ .  $\diamond$

**Lemma 3.8.** *Let  $X, K \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ ,  $n \geq 4$ ,  $X$  smooth of codimension two,  $K \cong \mathbb{P}^{n-2}$  a linear subspace. Let  $\dim(X \cap K) = n - 3$ . If the general hyperplane section of  $X \cap K$  contains a linear subspace of dimension  $n - 4$ , then  $X$  contains a linear subspace of dimension  $n - 3$ .*

*Proof:* We see  $X_K = X \cap K$  as a hypersurface in  $K \cong \mathbb{P}^{n-2}$ . A general hyperplane of  $K$  is cut on  $K$  by a general hyperplane of  $\mathbb{P}^n$ . Then the hypersurface  $X_K$  of  $K$  is such that its general hyperplane section contains a linear subspace of dimension  $n - 4$ . We claim that  $X_K$  contains an hyperplane of  $K$ . Indeed we may assume  $X_K$  reduced. Let  $X_K = T_1 \cup \dots \cup T_r$  be the decomposition of  $X_K$  into irreducible components. Now using the fact that the general hyperplane section of each  $T_i$  is irreducible, we conclude that one of the  $T_i$ 's has degree one and thus  $X_K$  contains an hyperplane of  $K$ .  $\diamond$

*Proof of Theorem 1.1:* We only need to work out the case  $n = 5$ . We will follow the method used in the proof of Theorems 1.1 and 1.2 of [3]. We must distinguish three cases, depending on the behaviour of the base locus  $\mathcal{B}_q$  of the conics  $q_H$ . If  $\dim(\mathcal{B}_q) = 0$ , at least two of the conics intersect properly and then  $\deg(\mathcal{B}_q) \leq 4$ . It follows that  $r := \deg(\mathcal{R}) \leq 4$  too, since  $\mathcal{R} \subset \mathcal{B}_q$ . If  $\dim(\mathcal{B}_q) = 1$ , there are two possibilities: the one-dimensional part of  $\mathcal{B}_q$  can be a line or a conic.

If the conics  $q_H$  move, i.e. if  $\dim(\mathcal{B}_q) = 0$ , we have seen that  $r = \deg(\mathcal{R}) \leq 4$ . We observe that actually we can suppose  $r \geq 1$ , indeed by 3.3 if  $\mathcal{R} = \emptyset$ , then  $S$  (and  $X$ ) is a complete intersection.

If  $H$  is a general hyperplane,  $Y_H \cap P \subset q_H \cap P$  and since at least one conic intersects  $P$  properly, we obtain  $Y_H.P \leq 2p$ . We have  $Y_H.P = p - P^2$  and recalling that  $r = d - 2p + P^2$ , it follows  $Y_H.P = d - p - r$ . Putting everything together:  $p \geq \frac{d-r}{3} \geq \frac{d-4}{3}$ . On the other hand we have  $Y_H.P = p(e + 5 - p)$  and clearly this implies  $p \geq e + 3$ . Comparing this with the result stated in 3.3 and setting  $\omega_S \cong \mathcal{O}_S(e + 1)$ , we are left with only two possibilities:  $p = e + 3$  or  $p = e + 4$ . We have already observed that  $d = p(e + 6) - p^2 + r$ , then considering the two cases above, we can express  $d$  in terms of  $e$  and  $r$  and we get the following formulas:

$$\text{if } p = e + 3, \text{ then } d = 3(e + 3) + r \quad (2)$$

$$\text{if } p = e + 4, \text{ then } d = 2(e + 4) + r \quad (3)$$

We recall that if  $C$  lies on a quartic surface and  $d$  is large enough,  $X$  lies on a quartic hypersurface too, then  $X$  is a complete intersection. We know that  $\pi - 1 = \frac{d(e+2)}{2}$ , then since  $\frac{d-4}{3} \leq p \leq e + 4$  we obtain  $\pi - 1 \geq \frac{d(d-10)}{6}$ . If we compare this quantity with  $G(d, 5)$ , we see that if  $d \geq 33$ , then  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) \neq 0$  and  $X$  is a complete intersection.



Thanks to the result in Proposition 2.2 we know that if  $d \leq 25$ ,  $X$  is a complete intersection too, then we only have to check the cases  $26 \leq d \leq 32$ .

We assume  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_C(4)) = 0$ , then it must be  $\pi = 1 + \frac{d(e+2)}{2} \leq G(d, 5)$ . Thanks to this inequality it is easy to see that for  $d \leq 32$ , we always have  $e \leq 5$ . Now if we look at formulas (2) and (3) above, clearly  $e \leq 5$  implies  $d \leq 28$ .

On the other hand, in order to have  $d \geq 26$ ,  $e$  must be at least equal to 4.

If  $d = 26, 27, 28$ , the condition on the genus  $\pi$  yields  $e = 4$  again. However, if we look at formulas (2) and (3) we see that if  $e = 4$ ,  $d$  is at most equal to 25.

If  $\mathcal{B}_q$  contains a line,  $D$ , then  $D$  has multiplicity  $m - 1$  in  $\Sigma$ , so if  $H$  is a hyperplane containing  $D$  (but not  $\Pi$ ),  $F = \Sigma \cap H$  is a surface of degree  $m$  in  $\mathbb{P}^3$  having a  $(m - 1)$ -uple line. This kind of surface is a projection of a degree  $m$  surface in  $\mathbb{P}^{m+1}$ , by Lemma 3.5. The hyperplane section  $C = S \cap H$  is a curve contained in  $F$ . We must distinguish two cases:  $D \subset S$  or  $D \not\subset S$ .

If  $D \not\subset S$ , we claim that the general  $C$  is smooth. Let  $|L|$  be the linear system cut on  $S$  by the hyperplanes containing  $D$  and let  $B = D \cap S = \{p_1, \dots, p_r\}$ . Since  $B$  is the base locus of  $|L|$ , the general element of  $|L|$  is smooth out of  $B$ . If all curves in  $|L|$  were singular at a point  $p_i \in B$ , it would be  $T_{p_i}S \subset H$ ,  $\forall H \supset D$ . Anyway the intersection of  $H \supset D$  is only  $D$ , so this is not possible. It follows that the curves of  $|L|$  singular at a  $p_i \in B$  form a closed subset of  $|L|$ . The same holds for all  $p \in B$ , hence the claim.

Let  $F'$  be a surface in  $\mathbb{P}^{m+1}$  projecting down to  $F$ . Since  $C$  is not contained in the singular locus of  $F$ , there exists a curve  $C' \subset F'$  such that the projection restricted to  $C'$  is an isomorphism over  $C$ . In particular  $\mathcal{O}_{C'}(1) \cong \mathcal{O}_C(1)$  and since  $C$  is linearly normal in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ , this implies that  $C'$  is degenerate. Now we can apply Lemma 3.7 to  $F'$  and  $C'$  (we have already pointed out that  $F'$  is ruled in lines unless  $F'$  is the Veronese surface) and we get  $d = \deg(C') \leq m - m + 3 = 3$ . If  $F'$  is the Veronese surface we have anyway  $d \leq 4$ .

If  $D \subset S$ , then  $D$  is a component of the plane curve  $P$  (the one-dimensional part of  $S \cap \Pi$ ). Coming back to the variety  $X \subset \Sigma \subset \mathbb{P}^5$  with  $K \cong \mathbb{P}^3 \subset \Sigma$  a linear subspace of multiplicity  $m - 2$ , we have a surface  $X_K = X \cap K \subset K \cong \mathbb{P}^3$  such that its general hyperplane section contains a line. This implies by Lemma 3.8 that  $X_K$  contains a plane and thus  $X$  contains a plane, say  $E$ . This plane is a Cartier divisor on the smooth threefold  $X$ . Since we are supposing  $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z}H$ , there exists an hypersurface such that  $E$  is cut on  $X$  by this hypersurface, but this could happen only if  $\deg(X) = 1$ .

To complete the proof we only have to consider the case in which  $\mathcal{B}_q = q$ , where  $q$  is an irreducible conic (if  $q$  is reducible,  $\mathcal{B}_q$  contains a line). For every  $Y_H \in |H - P|$  we consider the zero-dimensional scheme  $\Delta_H = Y_H \cap q$ . For every  $H$ ,  $\Delta_H$  is a subset of  $d - p$  points of  $q$ .

There are two possibilities:  $q \subset S$  or  $q \not\subset S$ . If  $q \not\subset S$ , then  $\Delta_H$  is fixed (otherwise

the points of  $\Delta_H$  would cover the conic, as  $H$  varies, i.e.  $q \subset S$ ). It must be  $\Delta_H = \mathcal{R}$ . It is enough to compare the degrees of  $\Delta_H$  and  $\mathcal{R}$  to see that this implies  $P^2 = p$  and then  $Y_H.P = P^2 - p = 0$ . This is not possible since the corresponding hyperplane section  $C_H$  of  $S$  would be disconnected.

Hence  $q \subset S$  and then  $q \subset P$ . In other words:  $\Delta_H = Y_H \cap P$ , thus  $Y_HP = d - p$  and  $r = 0$ . By Lemma 3.3 we conclude that  $X$  is a complete intersection.  $\diamond$

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